

Fall 2007

The Promethean: Fall 2007

Stephanie Cummings

Melissa Broderick

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/promethean>

Repository Citation

Cummings, Stephanie and Broderick, Melissa, "The Promethean: Fall 2007" (2007). *The Promethean Honors newsletter*. 18.
<https://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/promethean/18>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Honors College at The College at Brockport at Digital Commons @Brockport. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Promethean Honors newsletter by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @Brockport. For more information, please contact kmeyers@brockport.edu.

HONORS PROGRAM NEWS

FALL 2007

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT - *DOUBT* WORTH THE TRIP

BY KYLE RYAN, ENGLISH MAJOR



Sean Patrick Reilly, photographed by Ken Huth, submitted by Geva Theater.

This year, freshmen Honors Program students were treated to a showing of the hit play *Doubt* written by John Patrick Shanley. Nearly fifty students, accompanied by the Introduction to Honors instructors, boarded busses and headed for the historic Geva Theatre in downtown Rochester. Geva provided a delicious lunch and interesting theatre experience, to say the least. Students spent their afternoons enjoying an award-winning play—and the play did not disappoint.

Sean Patrick Reilly plays Father Flynn, a strong individual who commands the stage. Using a perfect Bronx accent, Reilly convinces the audience that he truly is a pastor of the 1960's at a religious school (where there seems to be a lot more going on than

praying and teaching). The audience is first greeted by Sister James as her indecisive innocence is portrayed flawlessly by Lia Aprile. Judith Delgado gives, what I consider, the performance of the afternoon as she portrays Sister Aloysius's unwavering defiance effortlessly. Lastly, Nikki E. Walker makes her voice known as the highly-emotional Mrs. Muller.

The *New York Daily News* calls *Doubt*, "Gripping. Impressive! *Doubt* takes the stuff of headlines and turns it into deeply moving drama." The play dances around the serious issue of a pastor accused of being a child predator. Despite the confrontation of this serious issue, the storyline is complete without addressing the underlying moral concerns. The play's subtle jokes remind the audience that there is always another perspective even in the midst of controversial issues.

Am I glad that I attended the performance? Absolutely. Even though the common reaction may be that the subject matter isn't for viewing, I think the play is subtle and witty, and a Saturday afternoon well spent. As we exited the theatre many students commented on how the experience "wasn't too bad." From a group of college freshmen, I consider this a fine compliment.

Stephanie Cummings

Newsletter Editor

Melissa Broderick

Assistant Newsletter Editor

Dr. Kenneth O'Brien

Director of Honors Program

Dr. Donna Kowal

Associate Director of Honors
Program

Ms. Darlene Waters

Secretary

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

FROM THE DIRECTOR 2

PEER MENTOR PROGRAM 2

HONORS CLUB TAKES ACTION 3

HONORS CLUB OFFICIALS 3

SUMMER INTERNSHIPS 4

SENIOR THESES 5

SOPHOMORE YEAR NEW PERSPECTIVES 6

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

BY DR. KENNETH O'BRIEN

I extend the warmest welcome to both the returning Honors students and the new students who joined the program this fall, 83 freshmen and 29 transfers. The freshman group is the highest in a number of years, and their quality, based on incoming numerical criteria is excellent, with average SAT scores of 1229 and high school grade averages of 96. The new transfers are equally strong, bringing with them average GPAs of 3.8! Together you are a very talented and accomplished group, one of the largest in the State University of New York, with unlimited potential to meet the challenges ahead.

To assist you, each of the new students has been assigned to a peer mentor group. These volunteers have committed themselves to giving each of you the best opportunity of making a successful adjustment to the demands of this College, in its classrooms, in its labs and theaters, on its playing fields, and in its residence halls.

In addition to the Honors students who have volunteered to serve as Peer Mentors, there are also the Honors Club officers who meet to plan a variety of programs (lectures, panels, gatherings) and activities. The Club has just begun its planning and anyone who has ideas to propose should feel free to contact either Emily Lottes or the Honors office (honors@brockport.edu). We'll make sure the information is passed on to the Club officers.

These are but two of the possible ways that each of you can become more deeply involved in the program and in the College, which I urge you to do. Go to concerts and lectures, attend fine arts performances, listen to poets read their work or philosophers explain our universe. Write for the newspaper, hang around WBSU, or attend intercollegiate sporting events where you will see your classmates, real students taking real classes, compete against other colleges. The point is to get involved, to make yourself available to the rich variety of experiences that this College offers.

If you do, your College experience will be much more than a collection of courses that give you a formal education and the degree that you are seeking. It will, in fact, become an enriched experience that will serve you for a lifetime, one in which you as a member of this community will discover unknown places, experiences, and pathways to knowledge that were unimagined. Each of us on the teaching faculty and professional staff, who have devoted our professional lives to your education, wish you the very best in your individual and collective journeys.

HONORS PEER MENTORING PROGRAM FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS

BY STEPHANIE CUMMINGS, BROADCASTING MAJOR

As a transfer student coming from a community college, I was in for quite a shock when I began my education at Brockport in the spring of 2007. I found the larger class sizes, assortment of buildings, and extensive homework assignments (I could go on) to be overwhelming. My decision to join the Honors Program helped me tremendously, because although there are over 300 students enrolled in the program, I continue to feel personally involved with the faculty, facilities, and more recently, members of the peer mentoring program.

Since I was not at Brockport as a freshman, I could not qualify as a freshman peer mentor. The freshman peer mentors delve into the freshman reading (this year's *Miracle in the Andes*, written by Nando Parrado, featured on page 5), Honors 112 class, academic goals, and more. As a transfer mentor, I am more of a lifeline—a resource for all members of my group at all times.

The transfer mentor program began only two years ago, and I hope it will continue to prosper long after I graduate. Entering college as a freshman is literally beginning an entirely new chapter. Entering as a transfer student is merely another stage of that chapter of our lives. Transfers may not have as many questions as freshmen, but they may still need a mentor to offer guidance, suggestions, or even friendship. For these reasons, I am glad to be a part of the program, and I encourage all transfer students to take part in this rewarding experience.

HONORS CLUB TAKES ACTION

BY MELISSA BRODERICK, ENGLISH MAJOR

"WE'RE HERE
FOR A
PURPOSE."

JUSTINE PRUSS,
HONORS CLUB
VICE PRESIDENT

With the election of brand new officers, Brockport's Honors Club got into full swing with their first meeting on September 19, 2007. A sense of excitement and anticipation was felt by all as the group was faced with the task of deciding where to focus their energies for the 2007/2008 school year. An underlying theme in the ideas presented was that of community service. Vice President/ President Elect Justine Pruss states, "We're here for a purpose, and it's not just academics." This echoes the sentiments that the club feels as a whole about reaching out past our own problems in order to make a lasting impact on the community.

One of the ideas presented is a fall cleanup of the Sweden Senior Center, including leaf raking and overall tidying of the center. Other ideas were graffiti cleanup in Brockport and organizing a trip to work at a food shelter. On-campus, the club plans to have presentations much like last year's screening of "Supersize Me" and a discussion with nutrition experts afterward. The Honors Club

would like to work in conjunction with various academic departments in order to bring in speakers who can offer material that will compliment what is being taught in the classrooms.

A final decision made at the first Honors Club meeting was to purchase a mourning flag, intended for tragedies that strike our student population. This gesture can offer a measure of recognition and sympathy for the friends and acquaintances of those who pass. As a whole, the meeting was a success, and the Honors Club is well on its way to having a most productive year!

HONORS CLUB OFFICIALS

President: Emily Lottes

Vice President/ President Elect: Justine Pruss

(2 yrs as Vice President, Senior year as President)

Secretary: Claire Gravelin

Treasurer: Laura Martin

Transfer Rep: Samuel Hickson

Senior Reps: Alissa Chaney & Nicole Kolczynski

Junior Reps: Will Mitchell & Austen Dicken

Sophomore Reps: Jeremy Grant, Katherine Hansen & Laura Metzler

Freshman Reps: Ashley Dungan, Bryan Montgomery & Kyle Ryan



Honors Club officials. Photograph submitted by Melissa Broderick

SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

BY STEPHANIE CUMMINGS

Most of us used our summer vacations for much-needed relaxation or a chance to work and save money to pay back our dreaded college loans. On the contrary, two Honors Program students had great opportunities to experience internships, and they took them. The Honors Program doesn't require internships but they are highly encouraged in order to gain hands-on experience, outside knowledge, and networking resources. Laura Schiraldi and Alissa Chaney participated in unique internships over the summer, which they have both briefly recollected.



Alissa Chaney (left) and Laura Schiraldi. Photograph submitted by Laura Schiraldi.

BY ALISSA CHANEY, ACCOUNTING MAJOR

As an intern at a Rochester regional accounting firm, I had a great opportunity this summer to experience auditing and business travel first hand. Audits are performed to ensure companies and employees are doing as they say -- whether it is related to financial statements, expense reports, business-to-business purchases, etc. During four different business trips, I had the opportunity to audit individual expense reports to ensure that employees were not deducting improper or outrageous amounts and to also audit dealers to verify that the company had truly bought and not returned any of my client's products. After trips to Cincinnati, Ohio, Lancaster, Pennsylvania and Stamford, Connecticut, as well as many delayed flights and one long all-night drive from New York City to Rochester, I was very appreciative for the chance to experience business travel and audits first hand, but also very glad to be back to the less-stressful life of a college student.

BY LAURA SCHIRALDI, BIOLOGY MAJOR

I was fortunate this summer to be chosen for a science fellowship at the University of Rochester. Under the supervision of internationally known Dr. John "Jack" Werren, I designed and carried out my own eight week research project. My project focused on the Werren Lab's MLST (Multilocus sequence typing) project. The MLST project has tested thousands of insects for the presence of *Wolbachia*, a parasitic bacterium that infects many insects, as well as some crustaceans and nematodes. *Wolbachia* has different strains, and the MLST project is interested in the global location and order of insects each strain infects. This knowledge about *Wolbachia* could lead to conclusions about evolutionary trends, pest control, and biomedical applications.

My project focused on Lepidoptera-butterflies and moths. I took pictures of hundreds of Lepidoptera for identification, and screened approximately fifty for the presence of the bacteria. Once *Wolbachia* was found in my samples, I then began the MLST project on them. The fellowship provided an enjoyable work environment and was at times mentally challenging. However, after a short eight week time frame I accomplished so much, and acquired a great deal of knowledge in the field of scientific research. At the time, it was extremely hard work but looking back now, it was definitely a summer well spent.

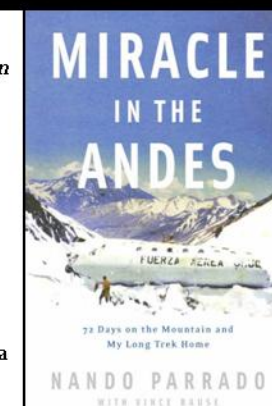


NANDO PARRADO VISITS BROCKPORT

BY STEPHANIE CUMMINGS

This year's summer reading for freshmen Honors Program students was a recollection by renowned writer, Nando Parrado, who survived a plane crash in the Andes Mountains. In his memoir, *Miracle in the Andes*, he vividly recounts the 72 days he spent fighting for his life. With only few other living members of his rugby team, Parrado survived after turning to cannibalism, relying on perseverance, and refusing to give up. Thirty-five years later, he travels the world discussing his recollections and sharing wisdom with younger generations.

Parrado visited Brockport on September 10th, 2007. "It was evident that Nando Parrado was here with a simple message for a group of friends. I can tell that there wasn't any clash between the image he constructs of himself in his book, and the image he portrays in real life. He abides by what he says in these pages", says freshman student Krasmira Filcheva, who attended the presentation. Parrado is a first class survivor and a real life hero to all.



"You are creators. You are building every single moment and giving it an epic meaning. You are your life. See through it. Don't separate yourselves from what is happening to you. You have the strength to change it at any moment."

—NANDO PARRADO, Author of *Miracle in the Andes*

SENIOR THESIS TOPICS

BY MELISSA BRODERICK

This fall represents a new season of thesis projects to the Honors program, and it appears that our graduating seniors are working with some very interesting topics. While there are a variety of projects underway, Cassie Buckley and Juan Castaneda have offered us a sampling of the senior thesis journey. Not only are we privy to their topics, but also the constraints they have come across so far, and the ways in which they are overcoming them.

Cassie Buckley, a Spanish and theater double major, has decided to write an adaptation of Haven Kimmel's book *A Girl Named Zippy* in the form of a script. She will complete her project by acting out the play herself and writing a 15-20 page journal including her artistic choices and the obstacles and conflicts she encountered throughout the project. Cassie finds this project challenging, saying "I have never written a script and never thought I would ever do it," yet she feels that the process has taught her many things, especially regarding criticism and patience.

Choosing a topic quite a bit different than Cassie's, psychology major Juan Castaneda decided to research ways in which Mexican families with first generation American children have adjusted to mainstream society. Juan has encountered difficulty researching this topic, as he is a frontrunner in the study of acculturation, and there is very little pre-existing information on the subject. He will continue his research by identifying and interviewing 25 families which are pertinent to his study. Juan finds his project to be exciting, as he is "one of the first people to ever conduct research on a Hispanic population in the northeast!"

SOPHOMORE YEAR PERSPECTIVES

BY CHARITY HENDERSON, ART MAJOR

Recently I was talking with two of my suitemates about approaching the "twenty-something" years, leaving the teens behind. One suitemate already celebrated the big 2-0 and she was asked if she had felt "old" on her birthday. She replied, "No, but when I consider that I'm a junior in college, then I kind of do..." I won't be a junior until next year, but I know how she feels. Telling people I'm a sophomore in college is somewhat prickly reminder that I'm growing up, and my college career won't last forever. In fact, I think the biggest difference between this year and my freshman year is simply that the future seems to be so much closer this time.

Freshman year was all about getting adjusted to classes and room-mates, teachers, and 15-minute walks to Hartwell in freezing cold. Graduation seemed far away, in a fuzzy and barely conceptualized future. Although I knew there was much more waiting in life than an undergraduate degree, college was all I could get my focus around.

But this year, I can see college a mere four years: just one section in my future, in my life. It brings to the forefront a question that has lurked in the back of my mind for a long time: What kind of career do I want to be involved in when I finish college? I have considered this question before, of course. Who doesn't? But now it has a new urgency and clarity. When I choose studio art as my major, I did so because I liked art and because it was an area where I had at least some talent. I wasn't thinking of what I would actually *do* when I graduated. This year I'm doing battle with the question—not theoretically, but in logistics. What jobs are available? Will I have the skills and credentials for these jobs? How much money do they make? Where would I live if I had this job? I've started to investigate the range of job available with an art degree, and to picture myself in these jobs. I pay special attention when I hear about someone with a career in the art field. Fuzzy plans are being hammered out into possible careers that I can actually conceptualize.



"Lavender Rose" Oil on canvas by Charity Henderson

I know I still have almost three more years of college left, and I'm far from having to make a final career decision. Still, the recently acquired sense of a looming career is, I think, an essential element of my sophomore year. A new addition to my upperclassman status, this awareness is far more important than the little red strip on my Eagle One Card. It's a necessary understanding that, while taking advantage of my time at college, I need to be ready for the future that follows.



"Seaside" Oil on Canvas by Charity Henderson

UPCOMING RELAY FOR LIFE

The fourth annual American Cancer Society Relay for Life at SUNY Brockport will be held April 25th at 6 p.m. This is an overnight event that supports cancer research, prevention, and awareness. Honoring those whose lives have been impacted by cancer, participants are given the opportunity to dedicate luminaries in memory of people who have touched their lives.

The Relay is a fun-filled evening featuring live entertainment, activities, and food throughout the event. To learn more about Relay for Life, to form a Relay team, or to become a member of the Honors Club team, please visit www.acsevents.org/relay/ny/sunybrockport or contact Alissa Chaney at acha1224@brockport.edu.

CONTRIBUTE TO THE HONORS NEWSLETTER!

The Honors Program Newsletter is a publication dedicated to the Honors Program, faculty, students, and alumni. Articles are written by Honors students, and are designed to provide information to the Honors community. Content will include a variety of topics, including research, Honors program news and events, student and professor spotlights, experiences, and creative work. For submissions or more information, please contact Stephanie Cummings at scumm1@brockport.edu.